

The Federal Diary

By Jerry Kluttz

Mass Firings Delayed By State Department

STATE yesterday called off temporarily its mass firing of employees in the old offices of War Information, Inter-American Affairs, Inter-



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national Information, and Cultural Cooperation. Pierce MacCoy, the personnel director, who revealed the change in plans, explained that it had been decided yesterday to keep all employees on the

rolls for at least another month until Congress agrees on how much money the department will have for its new Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs. At stake is \$5,000,000 to continue some of the functions of the old Office of War Information. The department had planned to give out dismissal notices today to upward of 3500 war service and temporary employees in these four offices. MacCoy said the employees, instead, would be notified today that the dismissal order had been withdrawn for the time being.

PLANS also have been revised for the Washington office and it will be somewhat larger than had been anticipated, provided, of course, the department gets the five million dollars. Paper plans called for a staff of 500 here in the new Office of International Information and Cultural Relations, which is to be set up on January 1 by a merger of the four information divisions. Yesterday, however, it was agreed to keep a staff of 859 employees in that office here, 644 in the office proper and 215 in administrative and service work. A few of the radio and press and publications employees will be transferred to the New York office. The United Federal Workers of America has urged the department to give 90-day notices to employees who are to be laid off. Also it has asked that a register be established to give employees who are furloughed reemployment rights when vacancies occur. State employees who are slated for dismissal argue the personnel cutback should be made solely from OWI and OIAA employees.

WLB: This agency is faced with similar troubles. The labor disputes work of the War Labor Board will fade out of existence along with the board itself on January 1 and the employees engaged in this work will be given dismissal notices within a few days. Only the wage stabilization unit of WLB will be continued and it until June 30. Late yesterday the agency was unable to say definitely how many of the employees would be laid off and how many would be kept. At one time the board had 2600 employees but it is now down to 1600. It's estimated that about 1000 are engaged in disputes work and 600 in wage stabilization. But the WLB has money troubles with Congress, too, and an official explained yesterday that those employees who do not get pink slips within the next few days will not be certain of their jobs until June 30. The stabilization division prevents hourly wage cuts and it recommends price increases to offset increases in wages.

PAY BILL: With the Senate in an all-out debate on foreign policy, Chairman Downey of the Senate Civil Service Committee, has about given up hope of getting action this week on his bill that would raise salaries of white-collar Federal employees by 20 per cent. He hopes to call it up Monday. This delay of a week darkens the outlook for favorable Senate action. The Senate is anxious to adjourn and its members are tied up on all sorts of investigations. All this means that action may be postponed until next year. But Chairman Downey hasn't given up hope and he will push for an early vote.

DIARY NOTES: A 40-hour week for Veterans' Administration employees here is slated for January 1. VA is the only large agency whose employees have been kept on a minimum 5½-day schedule. . . . A record number of more than 32,000 veterans, wives of disabled veterans and widows of veterans were given Federal jobs during October. Since January 1, 189,830 veteran placement have been made in Government. . . . Chairman Burch of the House Postoffice Committee is drafting a bill to raise the salaries of the 375,000 postal workers. . . . President Truman has gotten word to Senator Wagner that he supports his housing bill. Senators Ellender and Taft are cosponsors of the legislation. The bill calls for aids to private industry, slum clearance, a research unit and a permanent national housing agency.

COAST GUARD: It will reduce its staff here to 1269 by June. In September it had on duty here 510 officers, 247 enlisted men, 811 Spars, and 833 civilians, a total of 2401. By June 30 it plans to be down to 912 civilians, 190 officers, and 30 enlisted men. All Spars will be either discharged or assigned to duties elsewhere. A few more civilians will be added to replace military personnel. . . .

MARINES: It will have a corresponding reduction of its military personnel during the same period. No lay-offs are planned among its 700 civilians at headquarters here. . . . TREASURY is still recruiting experienced accountants and investigators to run down tax dodgers for its Bureau of Internal Revenue. . . . NAVY: will scrap these battleships: The New York, Nevada, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Arkansas and the Texas.